

**AmeriCorps National Performance Measures
Pilot Year 2: 2011-2012
Output and Outcome Instrument Packet
MEMBER GED/ DIPLOMA ATTAINMENT**

Opportunity Focus Area: AmeriCorps Members

National Performance Measure: *If you select this national performance measure, you must choose both this output and outcome.*

Output: Number of unduplicated economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service (O13).

Outcome: Number of unduplicated [economically disadvantaged] members that obtain a GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps term of service (O16).

Definition of Key Terms¹

- ***Economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members:*** Current AmeriCorps members who are receiving or meet the income eligibility requirements to receive: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), Section 8 housing assistance.
- ***Individuals [AmeriCorps members]:*** Individuals who are entered into the CNCS National Service Trust database, who complete their term of service, earn an Education Award, or leave service due to compelling circumstances (see 45 CFR §2522.200). *Individuals who are not enrolled in the trust, or who are dismissed, will not be counted.*

Considerations for this National Performance Measure²

General

- Is a primary activity of your program to assist AmeriCorps members in obtaining a GED/high school diploma?

Output

- Are you able to identify and recruit AmeriCorps members who are economically disadvantaged (see Definition of Key Terms) and who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent?

¹ 2011 National Performance Measures: Background Information References and Authorities, Definitions, Suggestions Regarding Data Collection, and Additional Notes, CNCS:

http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_1018_ameri_corps_nofa_background_document.pdf

² For more on alignment of performance measures, see the AmeriCorps Toolkit:

<http://nationalservicerresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit>

Outcome

- Will an acceptable percentage of the members who participate in your program's member development activities be able to obtain a GED/diploma during their term of service or within 12 months from the time they complete service? Will the members receive the level of training or support needed during their term of service necessary to contribute to their ability to obtain a GED/diploma?

Data Collection Challenges

- Are you able to access information on member eligibility for this performance measure?
- Do you have a way to ensure that the members who fit the criteria (i.e. do not have a high school diploma/GED and are economically disadvantaged) are tracked in a database or Excel spreadsheet?
- To count AmeriCorps members toward the output, you must count unduplicated, eligible members who do all of the following:
 - are entered into the CNCS National Trust database,
 - complete their term of service **and**,
 - earn an Education Award.

You may also count enrolled members who have a compelling reason for leaving. Are you able to document and access this information for each AmeriCorps member? (e.g. *My AmeriCorps* portal tracks the Education Award).

- Members who obtain a GED/diploma while enrolled in the program or one year after service can be counted under this measure. Can you develop a tracking system to count each member who obtains a GED/diploma up to one year after completing his/her term of service?
- For those who do not obtain a GED/diploma by the end of their term of service, do you have a way of maintaining contact during the year after service? It is suggested that you contact members twice within the 12 month period after the end of their term of service, at the 6 and 12 month points, to measure GED/diploma status.
- After using the data collection instruments to document members, do you have a safe place to store these documents? This "raw data" will serve as evidence that you collected the outputs in a systematic manner, measured individuals who obtain a GED/diploma and can verify the results reported.

Data Collection Strategies**Output**

- During the intake process, make sure you inquire about educational status; whether a member has a GED/diploma.
- During the intake process, identify the members as economically disadvantaged by inquiring about health, housing and economic assistance used and eligibility for these services.³

³ Web-based systems can assist you in identifying eligibility of members for services. For instance, the Benefits Checkup takes 20-30 minutes and will determine eligibility for Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Section 8 housing. You will need to know income and assets before filling it out. <http://www.benefitscheckup.org/>

- Track members identified as economically disadvantaged and without a GED/diploma separately from those members who are not economically disadvantaged and without a GED/diploma. To avoid counting members who do not fit the eligibility criteria for this output measure, consider sorting targeted members by using the columns on criteria (see Member GED/Diploma Summary Log in this document), using an Excel spreadsheet or put this group of members into a separate Excel spreadsheet.
- Recommended: To show how the member development services may have contributed to the outcome, track the services related to educational advancement (classes, academic support or other GED assistance, etc.), by using an Excel spreadsheet to document assistance or class attendance (dosage of service) of the targeted members.

Outcome

- Using your existing end of term or exit instrument, add questions to assess whether target members obtained a GED/diploma during their term of service.
- Likewise, for those members who do not obtain a GED/diploma during the term of service, add questions to your Alumni or follow-up instruments to assess whether the target members obtained a GED/diploma within 12 months after the term of service.
- To ensure that you can administer the survey at the 6th and 12th months after the end of service, make sure you get email and phone contact information from at least two sources (e.g. member's parents and friends).

Sample Instruments in this Packet

Note: The Corporation is exploring the capability of *My AmeriCorps* to handle the collection of exit and follow-up data for those national performance measures pertinent to AmeriCorps members. However, at this time, each program will need to collect and report their own data.

Member Eligibility and GED/Diploma Assessment Questions – Output and Outcome

On the following pages, you will find specific questions which allow you to ascertain the educational status of members, pre-service and post-service, as required of this national performance measure. No doubt, your program has intake and exit instruments and possibly a follow-up or Alumni instrument (surveys, interviews). Follow-up or Alumni instruments are routinely administered by programs and in addition to assessing skills, satisfaction with assignment, and civic engagement in the community, they inquire about career or educational activities and aspirations of the members. Consider adding those questions to your current instruments.

Member GED/Diploma Summary Log – Output and Outcome

This summary log can be used to document members who fit the eligibility criteria, complete their service and earn an Education Award (output) and obtain a GED/diploma (outcome). You are encouraged to develop an Excel spreadsheet with this information and use the spreadsheet to document unduplicated members.

Member Eligibility and GED/Diploma

Sample Instruments:

**Member Eligibility and GED/Diploma Assessment
Questions – Output and Outcome**

**Member GED/Diploma Summary Log –
Output and Outcome**

Member Eligibility and GED/Diploma Assessment Questions – Output and Outcome

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To determine how many members fit the eligibility requirement for this national performance measure, do not have a GED or high school diploma (pre-service) and obtain a GED/diploma (in-service or post-service)
Who should complete this instrument?	AmeriCorps members should be responsible for reporting educational eligibility (pre-service) and whether they obtained a GED/diploma (in-service or post-service).
When should we complete this instrument?	At the start of the service year (education eligibility requirement). At the end of the service year and/or 6 and 12 months after service ends (secured GED/diploma - outcome).
What should we do to prepare?	Review and modify your current intake, exit and follow-up instruments used to track members in order to ensure that you can collect and report the data according to the national performance measure specifications. Consider adding or adapting the educational status questions to your existing instruments, as needed.
What should we do afterwards?	Keep all completed instruments together in a safe place; this is your data . You will enter the data into a log (Excel spreadsheet, database) to determine if you met your output and outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	It is very likely that your AmeriCorps program has an existing database or Excel spreadsheet to track members from the beginning of service. Likewise, many programs have exit and follow-up or Alumni instruments used to gather information after the term of service ends. The questions on the following page can be added to your program instruments (electronic or paper) or used as you develop instruments to document unduplicated members who meet the “no GED/diploma” eligibility requirement (output) and then obtain a GED/diploma (intermediate outcome). Whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save this “raw” data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outputs/outcomes.

Member Eligibility and GED/Diploma Assessment Questions Output and Outcome

Member Eligibility and GED/Diploma Assessment Questions – Output and Outcome

Pre-service: Intake or start of service instruments to be completed before or at the time AmeriCorps members begin service. Add these questions to your existing intake instrument or form to determine which members can be counted in this national performance measure.

1. Have you obtained your GED/diploma?

Yes

No

Not sure. Explain. _____

[If a member answers “not sure”, follow up to determine the eligibility (need a “yes” or “no” in order to know how to count the member) and the education plan.]

End of Service: Exit question. Add the question to your existing exit instrument, to be completed at the end of the term of service.

1. Have you obtained your GED/diploma since [enter date of enrollment in the AmeriCorps program]?

Yes

No

Post-Service: Follow-up or Alumni question. Add the question to your follow-up or Alumni instrument to collect information within 12 months after the end of service. It is recommended that the follow-up instrument be administered at two intervals after the term of service ends: at 6 months and again at 12 months (only to those who did not obtain a GED/diploma when last contacted).

1. Have you obtained your GED/diploma since leaving the [AmeriCorps] program on [enter exit date]?

Yes

No

Member GED/Diploma Summary Log - Output and Outcome

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To track and determine how many members fit the criteria (economically disadvantaged, do not have GED or high school diploma), complete service, earn an Education Award and obtain a GED/diploma
Who should complete this instrument?	A designated person (e.g. the program staff member) should be responsible for entering eligibility criteria, completion of service and results from exit/follow-up instrument (obtain GED).
When should we complete this instrument?	At the start of the service year (eligibility requirements). At the end of the service year (completion of service - output). After analyzing the exit, follow-up or Alumni instrument (obtain GED/diploma -outcome).
What should we do to prepare?	Enter the names of the enrolled members. Collect and record information from other tracking systems (intake, <i>My AmeriCorps</i> , member database) to determine eligibility and completion of service (columns will indicate those eligible for this output). Enter results from educational status questions at the end of service and 12 months afterwards. Modify the "Member GED/Diploma Summary Log" to fit your member development services.
What should we do afterwards?	Keep all the logs together in a safe place; this is your data . You will aggregate this data later to determine if you met your output and outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different forms can be developed or revised in order to track unduplicated members who meet the eligibility requirements (no GED/high school diploma and economically disadvantaged), complete their term of service and earn an Education Award (output) and obtain a GED (intermediate outcome). For example, you may want to develop an electronic member log (e.g., Excel spreadsheet) as demonstrated on the following page. Whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save this "raw" data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outputs/outcomes.

Member GED/Diploma Summary Log - Output and Outcome

Program Name: _____

Person completing this Log: _____ Program Year: _____

Instructions: Enter the members' names in the first columns. Document those members who met output eligibility (Columns 1 and 2), accomplished the output (Column 3 or Columns 4 and 5) and obtained a GED/diploma within 12 months (Column 6 or 7) by placing a numerical "1" in the column. Put a "1" in the three summary columns (A: met output criteria; B: met output; and C: met outcome) if all conditions for each have been met.

Member		Eligibility prior to service*			Output (O13)			Outcome (O16)			
Member Name		(1) economically disadvantaged yes=1	(2) no GED/ diploma prior to service yes=1	(A) Met output criteria 1 and 2 Yes=1	(3) Left for a compelling reason yes=1	(4) Completed term yes=1	(5) Earned Ed. Award yes=1	(B) Met output 3 <u>or</u> 4 and 5 yes=1	(6) Obtained GED/diploma by end of term yes=1	(7) Obtained GED/diploma within year after end of service yes=1	(C) Met outcome 6 <u>or</u> 7 yes=1
Last	First										
sample: Lore	Eve	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	1

*Before determining whether the output has been met, members must meet output eligibility criteria.

Notes

- (1) and (2) See definitions of member eligibility: no high school diploma and economically disadvantaged on page 1. Both must be present to meet output criteria.
- (3) or (4) and (5) Count members that left service due to compelling circumstance OR members that completed their term of service and earned an Education Award.
- (6) or (7) Identify members that obtained a GED/diploma during their term of service OR obtained a GED/diploma within 12 months after the end of service.

Totals:

Output (O13): Total number of eligible members (A) that completed term of service and earned Education Award or left due to compelling circumstances (B): _____

Outcome (O16): Total number of members that obtained a GED/diploma within 12 months of completing service (C): _____